



# HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

Human Resources & Risk Management  
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David Kester, Director

January 26, 2016

To: County Judge Emmett and  
 Commissioners

Fm: David Kester *DEK*

Re: **Proposed Guidelines Regarding County Government Operations Status Due to Severe Inclement Weather or Other Emergencies**

Vote of the Court:

	Yes	No	Abstain
Judge Emmett <i>Lee</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comm. <i>Lee</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comm. Morman	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comm. Radack	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comm. Cagle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Events such as the significant Memorial Day flooding earlier last year give rise to the need to communicate the status of certain operations of the County to both the public as well as County Personnel. The attached document provides guidelines regarding events that necessitate a delayed schedule or closure of County buildings or offices to the public in the event of such a disaster. During such events impacting all of Harris County, the County Judge will likely be asked to make public statements regarding the status of County Government Operations. Likewise, in the event of a specific or localized event (such a limited area severe weather condition or building emergency), a Department or Agency Head may be faced with a decision relating to a specific location of their operations.

In either case, departments should be prepared with contingent plans regarding the designation of personnel during such events and for the continuity of operations of their services and responsibilities.

The proposed guide provides clarification regarding the designation of a temporary closure and the responsibilities of department and agency heads to plan for safely maintaining operations during a suspension of normal business operations.

Upon approval of these guidelines, our office will coordinate with the Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management to provide training and assistance in updating department Continuity of Operations plans.

*- Co Judge - copy*  
*- Comm Pct 1-4 - copy*  
*RM - copy*  
*Ad - copy*  
*TRA - copy*  
*Lance - copy*  
*Olga - copy*

DEK2096  
 Attachment

Presented to Commissioner's Court

JAN 26 2016

APPROVE *C/L*  
 Recorded Vol *298* Page *60*

HARRIS COUNTY  
 BUDGET MANAGEMENT  
 DEPARTMENT  
 16 JAN 20 AM 9:10

# HARRIS COUNTY

## GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS STATUS AND DESIGNATION OF PERSONNEL GUIDE

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this guide is to clarify the Harris County "Government Operations Status" process and designation of personnel in the event of suspension of normal operations due to severe inclement weather or other emergencies. Suspended or delayed operations are intended to help keep both the public and employees safe.

### SCOPE

This guide applies to all Harris County employees. This guide presumes all Harris County employees can be utilized during an emergency, if warranted. Safety of employees remains first priority. Follow department/agency procedures for normal operations or for inclement weather or other emergencies. This guide does not supersede existing Harris County Personnel Regulations.

### TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

#### **Temporary Closure or Delayed Schedule:**

Harris County departments/agencies may be closed and normal operations suspended until further notice and will open and resume normal operations on a delayed timeframe. County employees are expected to arrive according to the schedule established by their department/agency.

#### **Normal Operations:**

Harris County is open and normal operating procedures are in effect. County employees are expected to report to work according to normal work hours.

### GOVERNMENT CLOSURE OR DELAY

#### **Harris County Judge:**

Due to a state of emergency, and/or a disaster affecting Harris County, in conjunction with a declaration of a local state of disaster the Harris County Judge may order a "Temporary Closure" or "Delayed Schedule" for Harris County.

Employees whose roles are critical to emergency operations/response and others who are required should report to work as scheduled or requested by their Department Head during such conditions.

#### **Department/Agency Heads:**

In the event of a site specific or localized incident a County Department/Agency Heads (or their designee) can order a "temporary closure" or "delayed schedule" for their department/facility and for normal operations to resume at a designated time. Site specific incidents may be due to limited area weather conditions, power outage, hazardous material odor or spill, water line break, or loss of climate control to name a few.

## HARRIS COUNTY GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS STATUS AND DESIGNATION OF PERSONNEL GUIDE

### NOTIFICATION OF OFFICE CLOSURE OR DELAYED SCHEDULE

Department/Agency Heads are responsible for communicating with both their employees and the public in the event of a site specific or localized incident necessitating a temporary closure or delayed schedule of their department/facility. It is recommended that communication include notification to the County Judge and Commissioners and (if mobilized) to the Joint Operations Center of the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

### DESIGNATION OF PERSONNEL

Harris County Departments/Agencies should determine, in advance, the work requirements of personnel during the suspension of normal business operations. The designation of personnel should be outlined in all department/agency continuity of operations plans (COOP). Agency/Department heads (or their designees) are responsible for classifying personnel based on the employee's duties as it relates to the Department/Agency's essential functions. For purposes of utilizing personnel during emergency operations and coordinating work assignments, employees could, (for example), be designated as a RED TEAM Employee, a WHITE TEAM Employee, or a BLUE TEAM Employee.

- **RED TEAM Employee** - An employee designated to sustain essential functions and operations of the department/agency. A RED TEAM Employee is expected to report to the appropriate work location even when a "temporary closure" has been issued for Harris County.
- **WHITE TEAM Employee** - An employee designated as support to essential functions. A WHITE TEAM Employee is required to check with his or her supervisor prior to going to a work location.
- **BLUE TEAM Employee** - An employee who will be asked to remain at home and may be called upon at a later time to support essential functions. A BLUE TEAM Employee is required to check with his or her supervisor for a duty assignment.

Employees should exercise discretion to ensure their personal safety during inclement weather or other emergencies. Departments/agencies are encouraged to plan in advance for in home work, training, or professional development that may be completed during times of delayed or suspended operations.